

Gun Ban

(Continued from Page 4)

District Court and the court dismissed the suit on the grounds that the city had a right to enact the legislation and there is no right to bear arms. The court appeals reversed the District Court's ruling, stating that the city's gun ban was unconstitutional and that an individual has a right to possess firearms.

The central question before the court was whether the city handgun ban is legal.

Advocates for the city ban include the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence and the primary pro-gun group that opposes the ban is the National Rifle Association. Both groups wrote amicus (friend of the court) briefs stating their position.

The Heller case has drawn national attention because it is only the second major case that the Supreme Court has heard in the past century on the Second Amendment. The high court's guiding principle on the Second Amendment is the 1939 case of U.S. vs. Miller, in which the court said that firearms may be maintained for use if needed in service of a state militia.

Dellinger argued to the court that there was a reason for the passage of the law at that time and the District did what it felt was right.

"This case will determine whether the District or any local political body has the right to determine whether citizens can possess firearms if they deem it in the best interest of the city to do so," he said. "We think this is the case despite that there is no issue of whether a militia is involved or not."

The Bush administration was represented by U.S. Solicitor General Paul Clement, who argued that the Second Amendment made it clear that citizens had a right to bear arms and that the government could not infringe on that right.

He agreed with Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy

"Make no mistake about it, this is a public safety case..."

When the gun ban became law, violent crime dropped significantly in the city and has steadily gone down since then."

— Adrian Fenty
Mayor of Washington D.C.



that this right was stated in the Constitution's Preamble, which argued for "providing for the common defense."

He said, "James Madison [one of the Founding Fathers] was guided by the English Bill of Rights in this instance. He said that the people had a right to arms to protect themselves from an oppressive government. He believed that any democracy had to have a pre-existing right to bear arms."

Heller's attorney, Alan Gura, argued to the court that the District's law unfairly harmed his client. Associate Justice Stephen Breyer disagreed with that notion.

"I do not believe that the amendment was just about maintaining a citizen army," Breyer said. "This past year, we have had 80,000 or 100,000 people killed, wounded or commit suicide by gun-related fatalities. Doesn't a city have the right to address this matter in the way it knows how?"

Gura said that the city cannot address the gun-related fatalities by way of a gun ban because "it infringes on individual rights."

Kennedy said that he was sensitive to the argument of individual rights, but saw a handgun ban as "a reasonable regulation of that right." Since the retirement of Sandra Day O'Connor from the court, Kennedy is viewed as the swing vote between the conservatives Roberts, Associate Justices Clarence Thomas, Antonin Scalia and Samuel Alito and the moder-

ates Souter, Breyer and Associate Justices John Paul Stevens, Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

The court has two options: it can declare the law unconstitutional and order the city to come up with a new plan that would address the concerns of the ruling, or it can state that the District law is constitutional and the case can serve as precedent in other jurisdictions who want to model their law according to the city. The court will announce its decision in June.

James Wright writes for Afro-American Newspapers.

Book chides loving bling

Ghetto Nation: A Journey into the Land of the Bling and the Home of the Shameless

By Cora Daniels; Doubleday; Hardcover; \$23.95; 222 pages
ISBN: 978-0-385-51643-3

By Kam Williams
Sentinel-Voice

"Ghetto no longer refers to where you live, it is how you live. It is a mind-set... a mind-set that thinks the M words — monogamy and marriage — are bad language... a mind-set that thinks it is fine to bounce, baby, bounce in some video, as if that makes it different from performing such a display on a table, on a pole, on some john's lap, or on the corner. Most of all, ghetto is a mind-set that embraces the worst. It is the embodiment of expectations that have gotten dangerously too low." — Excerpted from Introduction (pages 5-6)

Have you ever visited the website Hot Ghetto Mess? (www.hotghettomess.com) It's a site dedicated to Black bad taste that posts hilarious photos and videos of girls and guys gone ghetto. Now Cora Daniels has written a book about the troubling phenomenon in which she bemoans the fact that ghetto style is no longer limited to folks living in the slums.

Daniels, who herself lives in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, argues that ghetto

is now a state of mind which has been exported to the mainstream with the help of gangsta rap videos. This entertaining tome is as funny as it is cautionary, points out plenty of indications that you know you've gone ghetto.

Some samples include wearing a do-rag to school or court, speaking grammatically incorrect English, sporting gold caps on your teeth, driving a pimped-out automobile, and using the n-word or ho. The author argues that the adherents of this lifestyle are selling themselves short, since one's academic and employment prospects aren't very good when you don't aspire to be the best you can be.

Therefore, it's no surprise to hear Daniels side with Bill Cosby against the Hip-Hop Generation in the African-American culture wars, although she makes a point of never blaming the poor for their plight. Thus, she studiously avoids the trap that snares so many conservative pawns seen as stigmatizing those unfortunates trapped in the never-ending cycle of poverty. Rather, Ghetto Nation's primary thesis, convincingly articulated, equates ghetto with self hate because it typically inspires those degenerates stuck under its spell to embrace the lowest common denominator and to exhibit the worst of traits found in humanity.

Your Horoscope Says... Mar. 27 - Apr. 2

ARIES

Your money instincts are itchy! Go ahead and scratch, because you've got the golden touch this week. Promise yourself that you'll take at least one small step toward your dreams each day this week. You go!

Soul Affirmation: I seek connection with the best that is in me.

Lucky Numbers: 11, 20, 25

TAURUS

A loved one may feel a bit neglected as you pursue your material dreams with vigor this week. Time set aside for this person after you've made some gains will prove to be extra sweet. Try not to push a mate's understanding nature too far, though.

Soul Affirmation: My needs will be met if I just ask.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 13, 17

GEMINI

Stay open-minded this week and you'll actually feel the good vibrations! Co-workers will wonder at the smile on your face, but let it be your secret for now. Your smile itself will make others smile about their own lives!

Soul Affirmation: I smile as I think about far away places.

Lucky Numbers: 31, 36, 47

CANCER

Big appetites this week! Indulge at least one of your passions and then get back to work. You are making incredible strides toward your dream by just reminding yourself of it. Drive carefully and pay attention to brake lights.

Soul Affirmation: Smooth communications is the key to my success this week.

Lucky Numbers: 27, 29, 44

LEO

Relax a bit and review your "things to do" list. Move methodically, and check off each item as you complete them. You'll be surprised by the progress you are making. Spend the afternoon with family, and friends.

Soul Affirmation: This week family is the source of my joy.

Lucky Numbers: 13, 50, 52

VIRGO

Your best self is on parade this week, and wow! You look good! Co-workers will beat a path to your cubicle, so be prepared to turn chatterboxes away gently. Give your honey a phone call or send a loving email.

Soul Affirmation: I open myself up to the vibrations of love.

Lucky Numbers: 18, 25, 36

LIBRA

This week's a good week to approach that person you've been wondering about. While you've been working very hard, you need to play, too. Good playmates make work seem more rewarding to you.

Soul Affirmation: I master life by mastering myself.

Lucky Numbers: 23, 37, 51

SCORPIO

Can you take a week off from work? It's a perfect week to relax with a loved one in one of your favorite ways. Even if you can only spend a few hours decompressing you'll be surprised at how little it takes to feel bliss this week.

Soul Affirmation: I let the outer world and inner world change places this week

Lucky Numbers: 34, 45, 50

SAGITTARIUS

Vibrations this week make everyone

feel as if the universe has given them another chance. Your fresh start may come in a romantic area. Buy a bouquet of flowers for your partner on your way home from work. See what happens.

Soul Affirmation: I celebrate freedom of mind this week.

Lucky Numbers: 15, 24, 26

CAPRICORN

A short trip for business reasons gives you a little personal space to make some notes to yourself. Remember your best self, and keep a positive outlook. Buy a lottery ticket this week at your destination, or watch for some other type of "found" money.

Soul Affirmation: I judge no one, especially myself this week.

Lucky Numbers: 11, 17, 32

AQUARIUS

Your home may need some of your attention. This is a fine week to check the fire alarm battery, put away gardening equipment, or redecorate your dining area. The results of a shopping trip for new bed linens will please you very much.

Soul Affirmation: I keep my smile shining, especially at home.

Lucky Numbers: 16, 17, 31

PISCES

Spend some time in the company of friends early in the week, then spend your afternoon relaxing. Your ability to tune out and mediate on the goodness that surrounds is comes easy. Let the good vibrations massage you with bliss.

Soul Affirmation: I let positive emotions carry me through the week.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 23, 34

Church

(Continued from Page 4)

The spotlight has placed the 8,000 mostly Black members of the church in the unusual position of being asked to explain something deeply personal — their faith and the way that they worship.

Linda Thomas, a professor of theology and anthropology at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, has been a member of Trinity since 1997. She said she views the scrutiny of the church "as an opportunity for teaching."

"What's happened has opened up an opportunity to learn more about the prophetic ministry of Trinity United Church and of our awesome pastor Dr. Jeremiah Wright," she said. "And it brings in our new pastor in a big way."

She said she hopes people will realize Wright's comments have been taken out of context. "A sound bite cannot capture... a whole sermon," Thomas said.